

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are all the claims pending in the application.

Formal Matters

Independent claims 1 and 4 have herein been amended. Applicant respectfully submits that the claim amendment should be entered because it is analogous to features of pending claim 10, which has been fully considered by the Examiner. Therefore, the Amendment raises no new issues in need of further search or consideration.

Prior Art Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-9 and 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Inai et al. (US 4,437,111) in view of Konishi (US 4,774,564). Applicant respectfully traverses the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection as set forth below.

The Examiner conceded that Inai fails to teach or suggest when the sensitivity is insufficient or sufficient, the intensity of the color separating process is increased or decreased, respectively. (Office Action, page 5). In an attempt to cure the deficiencies of Inai, the Examiner applied Konishi for its color separation process. However, the color separating process of Konishi introduces the occurrence of noise via its variable application means (124R, 124G, and 124B) for amplifying color-separated components. (See col. 3, lines 44-53; col. 4, lines 40-43.) Incidentally, in rejecting claim 10, the Examiner noted that the combined teachings of Inai and Konishi fail to disclose performing specified processing schemes that do not generate noise. (Office Action, page 8.)

In the same manner, the combined teachings of Inai and Konishi fail to teach or suggest when relatively increasing or decreasing the intensity of said color separating process, an

occurrence of noise generation is not thereby increased during color separation, as recited in claim 1. To amplify the input color signal of RGB, as disclosed in Konishi, by increasing the gain of variable gain amplifiers 124R, 124G, and 124B when the quantity of incident light is small and the color temperature is low during image capturing causes the increase of noise to deteriorate the image quality. Therefore, the combined teachings of Inai and Konishi fail to teach or suggest the features of claim 1.

Further, in the rejection of claim 10, the Examiner maintained that Kimura teaches “the photoelectrically converted signal of the CCD (120) is outputted to an amplifier and undergoes a noise reduction process and inputted to a color separating and signal processing circuit (123)... In light of the teaching from Kimura, it would have been obvious to...modify the device of Inai and Konishi by **having a noise reduction circuit between CCD 120 and the color separating unit/signal processing circuit 123** as claimed by Kimura in order to provide an improved standard video signal with noise removal [emphasis added].” (Office Action, page 9.)

The noise reduction circuit in Fig. 1 of Kimura does not reduce any noise that occurs during color separation because the noise reduction circuit 122 is input into the color separating and signal processing circuit 123. Particularly, the noise reduction circuit 122 is to reduce the noise generated in an image signal, which is photoelectrically converted by a charge-coupled device (CCD) 120 or amplified by an output amplifier 121, but the noise reduction circuit 122 is not for reducing the noise after it has been generated by the color separating and the signal processing circuit 123. Thus, the noise which necessarily occurs in the color separating process of Konishi cannot be obviated.

Moreover, if Inai and Konishi were modified to include the noise reduction circuit 122 of Kimura, the color separating process in Konishi would still introduce the occurrence of noise via its variable application means for amplifying color-separated components. That is, even if noise is reduced, as modified by Kimura (Fig. 1), prior to being input in a color separation circuit, the color separation process in Konishi would inherently introduce noise. In Konishi, the color separation process (*that allegedly reads on increasing or decreasing the color separation intensity based on insufficient or sufficient sensitivity*) re-introduces noise during color separation via its variable amplification means, so even if Inai and Konishi are modified to include the noise reduction circuit as taught by Kimura, the combination (of Inai, Konishi, and Kimura) would not read on the above-identified feature of claim 1. The fact remains that noise is introduced during color separation in the combined references.

Therefore, even when taken as a whole for what they would have meant to a skilled artisan, the combined teachings of Inai, Konishi, and Kimura fail to teach or suggest when relatively increasing or decreasing the intensity of said color separating process, an occurrence of noise generation is not thereby increased during color separation, as recited in claim 1. For the foregoing reasons, independent claims 1 and 4, along with their respective dependent claims 2, 3, and 5-13, are patentable. Therefore, the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claims 1-13 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Inai in view of Konishi and further in view of Kimura (US 5,940,126).

For at least the foregoing reasons, claim 10 is patentable by virtue of its dependency from claim 4. Therefore, the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of claim 10 should be withdrawn.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 10/092,517

Attorney Docket No. Q66506

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

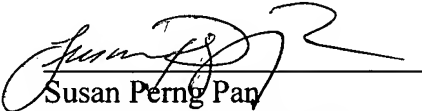
Respectfully submitted,

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER


Susan Perng Pan
Registration No. 41,239

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